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## **Statement by Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari during his joint press conference with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in Brussels**

*Following is the statement made by Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari during his joint press conference with NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in Brussels today:*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** Thank you Secretary General. I'm delighted to be here. I had, of course, seen the Secretary General earlier. But this was the first time I had the opportunity to address the North Atlantic Council and brief them of what we're talking in Vienna, what we attempt to achieve with these talks, these technical discussions that have been going there for a few months and will continue another month, perhaps a bit longer. We have been talking on decentralization issues, how to create.... The aim of these discussions I would like to put it very briefly is to create through these talks a secure living and working conditions for minorities and particularly for the Serb minority in Kosovo.

We have been taking new topics last time for a number of new municipalities. So it is not surprising, as I have said earlier, that we can't see eye-to-eye with the parties immediately. My colleagues are travelling at the moment. My deputy Albert Rohan was yesterday in Belgrade and today in Pristina. Next week on the 23<sup>rd</sup> we will have a meeting in Vienna on cultural heritage and religious sites that has been prepared by my colleagues who have been travelling in the region.

The important thing to be here is that first of all I want to thank NATO for the liaison arrangement that has been established with my team and NATO. We have one military and one civilian who are working closely with us in Vienna and visiting Vienna in the case of the military one when we are in need of that, because the whole security sector is a very important one.

Whatever the status in the end of this exercise is going to be, it's going to be international precepts. And NATO will be there. And NATO's presence is vital. And I think that both parties see the importance of NATO's presence because we need the protection of the minorities. We need the protection from

NATO for the cultural heritage and religious sites. There are many elements. And then not only that but also the training of the local expertise in the security area.

This was the reason why I'm here. I was very pleased with the active participation in the discussion. And I'm going from here to Strasbourg, to the Council of Europe. Then, I'm heading to Prague and I hope to be in the region soon.

I will be travelling to my part of the world in the beginning of next week and then the following week to Moscow and the following week after to China to brief the political leadership there. I hope that in the coming June we have gone through all these different meetings. Then we will see the Special Representative Søren Jessen Petersen reporting to the Security Council on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June. After that, I will have to brief the [UN Security] Council, the Secretary-General. And then hopefully we can create conditions that will facilitate the move to the actual status talks.

### **Questions/Answers**

***Question:** President Ahtisaari, a year ago, we spoke in your office in Helsinki, when you were preparing the Aceh Peace Talks...*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** Yes.

***Question:** One question on Aceh: Do you think the peace process is going well in Aceh? And the second question is: Can Aceh serve as some sort of possible model for solution for Kosovo?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** First of all, I'm delighted that they succeeded in getting the full cooperation of European Union in fielding the Aceh monitoring mission. And it is a very competent official, my friend Peter Feith, who has been heading that. And many governments made their expertise available. I think it has come..., I have to be very candid and say that I think it has gone better than I expected. When you are the creator of the agreement, I know how difficult it is to implement. There have been, there still are issues. The law has not been passed yet in the Parliament. But the government is working on that, on Aceh. There are still some amnesty cases that need to be looked into. But all I know, the parties are working well together. And I think there are attempts to create also the participation of the civil society in a more constructive manner in the future, moulding the future of the society. And I hope that one of the organizations where I'm still a chairman of the governing board - it's called War-Torn Societies Project International, a Swiss NGO or international NGO situated in Geneva, its name by the way will soon be

changed to Into Peace in the middle of June; that date can be [inaudible] in facilitating partly that process.

So I'm pleased. And I think it is a good issue. And I'm sometimes worried that EU doesn't get enough credit of what it does. We are all of us prepared to be critical but there an opportunity to say praises for the EU's quick reaction first of all and very good work that the different experts have done there. This is missed. And it also represents a very interesting model for cooperation between regional organizations. I don't think there is any model for Kosovo. We have a different situation there.

**Question (Koha Ditore):** Mr. Ahtisaari, you are quoted on the BBC as saying that you hope for an agreement. But if there is no agreement, certainly there will be a solution for Kosovo. Are you inclining... implying that if Belgrade refuses agreement, international community will impose a status of Kosovo?

**Martti Ahtisaari:** I'm not implying anything of the sort. But let's go back to the time when ambassador Kai Eide, Norwegian ambassador to NATO, when he did his report. It was critical about the standards implementation. But at the end he said that the International community would move forward; that the present status quo in Kosovo can't continue forever that therefore it is important to start the Status Negotiations. The Contact Group has done a remarkable work and shown remarkable unity among the six nations with their guiding principles, their statements in London, their bilateral messages to different parties here. Everyone. That included also their statement that we should try to find a solution during this year. So, in other words, the International Community is moving forward. I said in one press conference that in my life there is also something in-between agreed solution and imposed solution; that life is a much more greater variety of solutions. These two are extremes. But then you have a grey area there in-between. So let's not talk how we get to the end game. But I think my responsibility is to try to see that we can solve this problem. If it doesn't happen on the 31<sup>st</sup> of December and it goes a week over to next year, then we have to live with that. But there is no other timeframe except the one given by the Contact Group.

**Question (Novosti):** Mr. Ahtisaari, yesterday, in fact this morning some journal reported yesterday you said in Slovenia that you have hope that the report of Mr. Petersen will be positive on standards' implementation. If it is true, on which information did you base your opinion?

**Martti Ahtisaari:** No, actually, I base it on your competitor's information. Because I read Reuters [inaudible]. It quoted, they said they had read a draft. But I don't think it's a final document. But even if the first drafts are saying positive things, I think it's a positive development. I have no other documentation available at the moment. I hope that in due course it will come.

But I'm travelling the whole of this week. And I won't be in Vienna before Saturday.

***Question:** President Ahtisaari, could you please tell us... Do you think a possible a pro-independence outcome of the referendum in Montenegro next week, this week, will have any influence on the Kosovo process?*

**Martti Ahtisaari:** I dealt with the question of Namibia from 1977 to 1990 and every year I was said, somebody passed me the same question: "Will the elections in one country or another have an influence?" I said: "Look, we have known for a long time this is coming. I don't think that it should have any effect in our work. It is a separate issue..."